



Maryland Longitudinal Data System Governing Board
Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2018

The meeting of the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Governing Board was held on March 9, 2018, in the Maryland State Department of Education Board Room, at the Nancy S. Grasmick Building. Dr. Jon Enriquez, Designee for Governing Board Chairman Dr. James Fielder, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

The following Governing Board members were in attendance:

Dr. Jon Enriquez, Director of the Office of Research and Policy, Maryland Higher Education Commission (Designee for Secretary Fielder).
Dr. Sylvia Lawson, Deputy State Superintendent for School Effectiveness, & Chief Performance Officer Maryland State Department of Education (Designee for Superintendent Salmon)
Mr. Cody D. O'Brien, Director, Performance Management Program, Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (Designee for Secretary Schulz)
Dr. Ben Passmore, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Policy, Research, and Analysis, University System of Maryland (Designee for Chancellor Robert Caret)
Mr. Dennis Hoyle, Senior Research Analyst, Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association (Designee for Ms. Tina Bjarekull, President)
Dr. Scot Tingle, Assistant Principal, Snow Hill High School
Mr. Christopher J. Biggs, Information Assurance Manager, Raytheon Company
Mr. Steven Rizzi, Vice President, PAR Government

The following MLDS Center staff were in attendance:

Mr. Ross Goldstein, Executive Director, MLDS Center
Ms. Tejal Cherry, Director of System Management Branch, MLDS Center
Ms. Laia Tiderman, Data Management Coordinator, MLDS Center
Dr. Angela Henneberger, Director of Research, MLDS Center and Research Assistant Professor, University of Maryland, School of Social Work
Ms. Ann Kellogg, Director of Reporting Services, MLDS Center
Ms. Dawn O'Croinin, Assistant Attorney General
Ms. James Dixon-Bobbitt, Executive Associate, MLDS Center
Dr. Laura Stapleton, Associate Director of Research, MLDS Center and Associate Professor, University of Maryland, College Park, College of Education

Approval of the December 8, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Dr. Enriquez asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 8, 2017 meeting. Dr. Passmore made a motion to approve the minutes that was seconded by Mr. Biggs. The motion was unanimously approved.

Summary of Center Output

Ms. Ann Kellogg began the presentation of the Center's Output by providing an overview of work on output during first two months of the year. Staff has been working on updating existing dashboards on high school to college enrollment patterns to include additional years of data and expanded data points. In addition, staff is working on expanding the high school pathway report that was completed last year and creating a new teacher pipeline that will examine first-time students going through teacher programs as well as students who begin their education at a community college program. Finally, staff is producing *Information Briefs* and *Research Spotlights*. The *Information Briefs* will highlight interesting data points from dashboards and *Research Spotlights* will provide concise and easily digestible information from the Center's in-depth research reports. In response to a question from Mr. Rizzi, Ms. Kellogg responded that the teacher pipeline will look at one cohort and their education and workforce outcomes. The eventual goal is to include multiple years to understand trends. However, there is not enough years of data to support that type of analysis at this time.

Next, Ms. Kellogg reported that there have been eleven data requests this year: five in January, five in February, and one in March. Last year at this time the Center had only received five requests. On average a data request takes 28 hours to complete and accesses six different data tables. Three of the eleven requests have included data from all three sectors (K-12, Higher Education and Workforce).

Mr. Rizzi asked for a copy of the questions posed by Amazon and the data provided by the Center in response. Dr. Passmore noted that the Amazon questions were distributed to numerous education agencies. It was a massive undertaking to get all of the questions answered in a short amount of time. In response to a question from Dr. Enriquez, Mr. Goldstein explained that Montgomery County needed the information to respond to Amazon's request for proposals for a second headquarters location. The Center worked directly with the Maryland Department of Commerce which was assisting Montgomery County on behalf of the Governor. There were further questions about releasing the actual questions posed by Amazon and the data provided, to which Ms. O'Croinin responded that she would review the matter and determine whether there were any applicable exceptions to the Public Information Act that would prevent the Center from providing the requested information.

Ms. Kellogg pointed out that five data requests were from postsecondary institutions, two requests were from MSDE, and, due to the ongoing legislative session, four requests were from Department of Legislative Services. Finally, Ms. Kellogg highlighted the Center's various collaborative engagements. Staff reached out to the Maryland Community Colleges Research Group (MCCRG), which is an affinity group for community college institutional researchers. Staff met with the group to provide an overview of the Center and how the Center can support their research needs. In addition, the staff has provided data for two fiscal notes on pending legislation.

Mr. Hoyle asked about what happens when the Center does not have the capacity to respond to all of the requests for data and information. Mr. Goldstein responded that currently staff is able to keep up with the demand. However, when demand exceeds staff resources, he will need to prioritize work to make sure the Center is responding to critical needs in a timely fashion.

Next, Dr. Henneberger provided a presentation of Research Branch output. The Center recently completed a report, requested by and done in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research at the University of Maryland, College Park. The report examines “Brain Drain” which occurs when students leave the state for college and do not return to the Maryland workforce. The study found that brain drain does exist: students who go out of state are less likely to be found in the Maryland workforce and they are generally the higher achieving students.

In addition, the February Research Series was a presentation on *The Effect of High School Career and Technical Education (CTE) on Postsecondary Outcomes*. The findings of the report presented during the Research Series included the fact that CTE completion had a positive effect on two-year college enrollment, but a negative effect on four-year college enrollment. Similarly, it had a positive effect on Associate degree earning, but a negative effect on Bachelor degree earning. Finally, CTE had a positive effect on wages. Specifically, the report found that six years after high school CTE completers earned \$3,000 more than non-CTE completers.

In response to a comment from Mr. Rizzi there was a discussion on the impact of the report due to the lack of data on federal employment and employment in neighboring states. Dr. Henneberger noted that the report included a section that clearly spells out the various limitations and caveats that must be considered in light of these data limitations. Mr. Rizzi also raised the issue of potential “Brain Gain,” whereby students come to Maryland from out-of-state for college and enter the Maryland workforce. Dr. Henneberger agreed that is an important question and will be a future topic of research.

Annual Review of MLDS Governing Board Bylaws

Mr. Goldstein began by noting that section 1.3 of the Bylaws state that the bylaws must be reviewed by the members of the Board at the first meeting of the calendar year. Mr. Goldstein reviewed the proposed changes to the bylaws that he and Ms. O’Croinin developed for the Board’s review.

1. Amend §1.3E to include a requirement that the bylaws be posted on the MLDS Center website. This proposed change reflects current practice.
2. Amend §3.1C to provide the correct citation to the Open Meetings Act.
3. Amend §3.1E to require that, in the event an additional meeting cannot be held in person, the notice provided for the meeting include a conference call number to allow members of the public to participate.
4. Amend §3.2C to provide the correct citation to the Open Meetings Act.
5. Amend §3.3A to alter the standing agenda items to include a legal update (when appropriate) and change the Executive Director’s Report to a Center Report, consistent with current practice.
6. Amend §3.3D to clarify that closed meeting minutes must remain sealed and separate from the open meeting minutes. The open meeting minutes must contain a summary of the closed meeting.

7. Amend §3.3D to clarify the process for approving meeting minutes. The Chair is authorized to approve the draft minutes, which are then posted on the Center's website. At the next scheduled meeting, the Board reviews and approves the final meeting minutes, which replace the draft minutes on the website.
8. Amend §4.1A to provide the correct citation to the Financial Disclosure Requirements.
9. Delete §§5.4D and 5.6, which establish a process for the Governing Board to review and approve the Center applying for a grant application or providing support for a grant application. These requirements are now addressed in the External Research Procedures.

Mr. Goldstein noted that he had a conversation prior to the meeting with Tina Bjarekull and Mr. Hoyle to discuss the proposed changes. They proposed keeping an acknowledgement in the bylaws of the requirement to review grant applications through the external research procedures. Specifically, instead of deleting section 5.4D it would be amended to state that the Board delegates the following duties to the Director, "Applying for grants within the Board approved research agenda and as specified by the Policies and Procedures for External Research Projects adopted by the Board."

There was a general discussion and agreement on the merits of including an acknowledgement in the bylaws that clearly states the required review and approval process. There was also a brief explanation by Ms. O'Croinin in response to a question from Mr. Biggs on how a closed session is managed in the event it is being conducted by conference call. Finally, Mr. Goldstein noted that the bylaws also include a schedule of the rotating vice-chairman position. Dr. Salmon is the vice chair for 2018.

Dr. Enriquez postponed a vote on the approval of the bylaws until after a discussion and adoption of the external researcher procedures.

Old Business - External Research Procedures

Mr. Goldstein stated that the procedures were reviewed at the last meeting. The discussion was favorable, but there were some suggested changes and the Board decided to postpone a final vote in order to have the changes incorporated prior to final approval. Mr. Goldstein reminded the Board of the collaborative and thorough process staff went through to develop the procedures. The changes that have been incorporated include the following:

1. Section 2.2B has been updated to clarify that projects will not move forward unless the external researcher successfully completes all steps necessary to become authorized staff of the Center.
2. Section 4.3 has been changed to provide more time for the various stages of the application review process.
3. Section 4.4 is modified to allow the Executive Director the ability to delay the start of a project due to the Center's workload.
4. Section 9.1A was changed to clarify that while researchers must perform suppression analysis and data masking in compliance with applicable privacy laws; it is the responsibility of the Center to ensure that it is correct before data is released from the system (see also Section 9.2B).
5. Section 9.4 was changed to provide more time for the Center to review research output before it is submitted for presentation or publication.

6. Section 9.5 was changed to clarify that system access is cut off when the project is complete. Staff authorization will be rescinded within one year of the completion of the project. Allowing the staff appointment to remain for a period of time after the project is complete will allow a researcher the ability to be re-granted system access in the event the researcher needs to make corrections.

Mr. Rizzi asked how the procedures address the grant review process that had been in the bylaws. Mr. Goldstein explained that Section 1.3 provides that the procedures are applicable to an external researcher or any researcher seeking to use MLDS data for an external research project or a grant funded research project. In addition, the review process includes all of the requirements that were in the bylaws. Specifically, it requires review by agency subject matter experts and counsel and approval by the Governing Board. The procedures provide some flexibility (as did the bylaws) by allowing the Chairman of Board to act independently or call an emergency meeting in the event that there is not sufficient time to present a proposed grant at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Mr. Hoyle noted that the title of the procedures do not acknowledge their applicability to grants. In response, Ms. O’Croinin proposed “Policies and Procedures for External Researcher and Grant Funded Projects.”

Mr. Hoyle made a motion to approve the Policies and Procedures for External Researcher and Grant Funded Projects. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rizzi and unanimously approved.

Next, the Governing Board returned to the Bylaws. Dr. Passmore made a motion to approve the Bylaws, including the change proposed by MICUA to include a reference that grant funded projects must be subject to the external research procedures. The motion was seconded by Mr. Biggs and unanimously approved.

Legislative Update

Mr. Goldstein began by noting that there are a few bills this legislation that have an impact on the Center.

- HB 823 - *Education - Public School Teachers - Preparation*, which requires a dashboard report from the Center, MSDE and MHEC. This bill has already passed out of the House. In response to a question from Mr. Rizzi, Mr. Goldstein stated that he notified the legislative analyst that the Center would not be able to fulfill the requirement to report on teachers who are employed out-of-state.
- SB 978 - *Career Preparation Expansion Act*, will provide the Center with license and industry certification data and requires a report from the Center. This bill has not passed either chamber at the time of the Board meeting.
- HB 378 - *State Department of Education - Social Security Number of Students*, prohibits MSDE from collecting, holding or storing Social Security Numbers. If passed, this will have an impact on the student data received from MSDE and the Center’s ability to match K-12 student data to workforce records. While the Center uses MVA data to obtain Social Security Numbers, not having the information directly and consistently from MSDE will have an impact on the Center’s ability to link as many K-12 students directly to the workforce.

Mr. Rizzi asked about the impact of the various legislative requirements and whether the Center has an opportunity to request additional funds in support of the additional work. Mr. Goldstein noted that agencies have the opportunity to discuss the impact of legislation through the fiscal note process. Thus far, Mr. Goldstein has not submitted a fiscal note indicating that a bill has a fiscal impact. This is because the requests are reasonable and can be accomplished using existing resources. Further, Mr. Goldstein does not want to discourage the requests because he wants the General Assembly to fully utilize the Center and its capabilities. At this time the requests serve to demonstrate the value of the Center to policy makers. There was further discussion about future needs and how the Center would go about requesting additional funds if needed.

Bylaws (cont.)

Mr. Goldstein stated that the bylaws establish the schedule for the Governing Board meetings. The current schedule is the second Friday in March, June, September, and December. Dr. Salmon notified Mr. Goldstein that the meeting schedule conflicts with a standing meeting held by the Public Schools Superintendents Association of Maryland (PSSAM), which affects her and Dr. Smith's ability to attend the Governing Board meetings. The schedule also creates a conflict for representatives from the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC) due to standing Friday meetings. As a result, staff sent out a survey to determine whether there was a different schedule that would work better. Specifically, the survey asked which dates members were not available. The results of the survey indicate that there is no date where everyone is available - although some dates and times had less conflict, including the current date and time. Mr. Goldstein noted his concern that not everyone understood the survey since some of the responses did not seem to be consistent with stated conflicts.

The Board discussed how best to proceed and accommodate the most members. Ms. O'Croinin explained that seven of the Governing Board members are allowed, under State law, to appoint designees. The member should consistently appoint the same designee. Staff was directed to confirm the results and provide a recommendation at the next meeting.

Budget Briefing

Mr. Goldstein began by noting that there was a memorandum in the folder providing an update on the current year budget (FY 18). This is the first year that the Center is fully staffed and there is a shortfall in the budgeted amount for salaries. Mr. Goldstein noted that the amount stated in the memorandum was not accurate and the actual shortfall is less than half that amount. To make up the shortfall and address other priorities, Mr. Goldstein explained that the Center will divert FY 18 funds that were planned for the Research Branch. The Center can do this and fully fund the Research Branch because funds encumbered in FY 17 were not fully spent in FY 17 and were available to fund the first half of FY 18. Dr. Passmore asked what would happen next year - will the Center be able to fully fund the Research Branch? Mr. Goldstein said that the FY 19 budget is still working its way through the General Assembly, but it appears based on the budget target the Center received, there will be sufficient funds to fully fund the Research Branch next year. Mr. Goldstein acknowledged that next year's budget is very limited and leaves no room for unanticipated expenditures.

Mr. Goldstein and Ms. Cherry explained that one unattended expenditure the Center needs to make this year is to procure new desktop computers. The current desktop computers are too old and cannot accommodate DoIT's hard drive encryption requirements. The Center had planned to do a partial refresh (half of the computers) but now wants to do a full refresh to address the encryption requirements. Since the expenditure is now over 10,000, Board approval is required.

Mr. Rizzi reiterated his concern that funding is insufficient to meet the Center's needs. Mr. Goldstein acknowledged those concerns. However, there is no opportunity to alter the FY 19 allocation, but there may be a need to submit an over-the-target request in the near future. Generally, the Center's budget falls into three buckets: staff salaries, information technology, and the Research Branch. The more that is allocated to salaries, the less there is for other priorities. Ms. Tiderman noted that staff have explored ways to increase capacity without an increase of funds. For example, the external research procedures are a way to generate additional work without additional costs. Similarly grant funds, opportunities to collaborate with partner agencies, and internships are additional ways to increase output with limited increase in costs. Dr. Passmore noted that ensuring that the Research Branch is fully funded is critical to supporting all of those types of efforts. In addition to facilitating external researchers or grants, the Research Branch is better able to scale up when needed to provide analysis or research.

Dr. Tingle asked whether there is a way to ensure IT purchases will be able to meet future needs. Ms. O'Croinin responded that five years is the normal lifespan for IT equipment in a rapidly evolving technology environment. In response to a question from Dr. Enriquez, Ms. Cherry stated that the Center does not have a formal IT hardware replacement policy and that she will work to develop one.

Mr. Biggs made a motion to approve the request to allow the Center to expend funds over \$10,000 for the purchase of new desktop computers. Mr. Rizzi seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

MLDS Data Gap Analysis

Ms. Tiderman began by explaining that the Gap Analysis document is a listing of the known gaps in MLDS data. This is the second version of the document. The first version was created at the request of P20 Council's MLDS Workgroup. The analysis has been greatly expanded and now identifies 30 data gaps. The gaps are categorized by sector and include the reason, impact, resolution if available, feasibility and status of the gap. Mr. Rizzi commented that it is an excellent report; noting that it is well organized, includes in depth information, and provides useful summary information. This document will provide the reader with a good understanding of the system's utility.

Ms. Tiderman went on to note that many of the gaps do not have a feasible remedy due to the lack of available data. Ten of the gaps have available data to varying degrees or require a legislative change. In response to a question from Mr. Biggs, Ms. Tiderman explained that the Gap Analysis categorizes data as infeasible if the data does not exist or is not collected and not likely to be collected due to the scope and complexity of doing so. For example, Standard Occupation Codes (SOC) are classified as infeasible. They are not collected by DLLR as part of the UI wage information and it would be unduly burdensome to DLLR and employers to collect a SOC code for every employee.

Ms. Tiderman went on to note that there are 13 gaps listed as closed because there is no action to take to obtain the data. Of the remaining 17 gaps staff has identified four priorities. First, is the removal of workforce records not matched to a student record. Staff has identified a solution and is working to implement that solution with DLLR. Specifically, DLLR will periodically resend a year's worth of prior data so the Center can match that data to students who started their education after starting work. Second, is the acquisition of apprenticeship data. Staff continues to be in contact with DLLR. DLLR has completed the transition to a new system for reporting apprenticeship data. The system is maintained and managed by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and DLLR must receive DOL's approval before the data can be shared. Ms. Tiderman noted that other states have reported that obtaining approval from DOL takes a long time. Finally, the final two priorities areas is to address the lack of federal and military employee data and the lack of contingent and alternative arrangement employee data (i.e. independent contractors). To fill this gap, staff has been exploring ways to obtain state income tax data maintained by the Comptroller. Ms. O'Croinin reviewed her findings from researching the feasibility of obtaining the data. There are significant legal obstacles that would have to be overcome. One issue is that much of Maryland tax data comes from the federal tax data and therefore is governed by federal tax law. Federal tax law prohibits the sharing of taxpayer identity and various other critical data points. There are certain exceptions carved out in law, but they are not applicable to the MLDS. The Comptroller withholding tax return does not list occupation and there are other limitations to that data that would render it less useful. Ms. O'Croinin, summed up by noting that to get any useful data it would require changes to Maryland tax law crafted in a way that would be consistent with the many requirements in federal tax law.

Ms. Tiderman discussed the Federal Employee Data Exchange System (FEDES) which collects and provides federal employment data to states. The system is currently offline as DOL negotiates a new provider/manager for the system. The Center explored gaining access to the system but found certain incompatibilities - including the fact that it did not allow the warehousing of the data - the data could only be received for a one-time analysis and report - not for inclusion in a longitudinal data system.

In response to continuing discussion about sources of federal data, Ms. Tiderman noted that staff will do more research, on what other states are doing - especially states that, like Maryland, have a high concentration of federal and military workers.

In response to a question from Mr. Biggs about the inclusion of criminal history data, Ms. Tiderman confirmed such data is prohibited under state law. Dr. Passmore stated that the exclusion of criminal history data was an important concession to getting the MLDS legislation through the General Assembly and seeking its inclusion would be difficult and controversial. Dr. Henneberger noted that the data would add a lot of value: for adults criminal history indicates a significant outcome and for K-12 students, juvenile delinquency and discipline are important behavioural data points that impact all analyses. Finally, Ms. Tiderman concluded the discussion by noting that staff will continue to work on the gaps and report back to Board with any updates and actions.

IT Update

Ms. Cherry began by reminding the Board of the work that the Center has done with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to implement various aspects of the enterprise management system. The next step is to physically move the Center's data system to DoIT's enterprise data center (EDC). The Center's data system is currently at MSDE. The Center must rely on MSDE's Office of Information Technology to perform needed upgrades and maintenance. The Center also relies on MSDE for its Oracle license. It would be cost prohibitive for the Center to obtain its own Oracle license (approximately \$400,000). MSDE is considering moving to the EDC, and given the Center's dependency on MSDE, if they move, the Center would have little choice but to do the same.

The DoIT EDC is maintained Tierpoint. The facility has good security and DoIT has agreed to require a criminal history background investigation of all personnel that come into contact with the Center's data system. The EDC can provide good system performance management and storage (MSDE has proven less capable of meeting the Center's needs in this area). Further DoIT has a full-time security team. Finally, Ms. Cherry noted that DoIT will also help the Center decommission the old system following a move. This is a significant task and an important consideration.

There are however several concerns with moving to the EDC. First, the Center staff will lose direct control of the network. Second, the Center will be reliant on the EDC support services to address any issues as compared to the current situation where Center staff can quickly address problems affecting the system. Third, DoIT is an all SQL environment - not Oracle and therefore does not possess the necessary Oracle expertise. Because of this, DoIT is also considering moving the Oracle services to the cloud. Finally, DoIT has not responded to the Center service level agreement document. That document contains assurances that the Center staff will have sufficient access to its system to be able to assess whether critical procedures are being followed and security is being maintained. The Center did not have that type of visibility when the system was located at the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) and found it to be detrimental.

Ms. Cherry concluded by noting that there were still too many unknowns to offer a final recommendation to the Board. She thinks things will be clearer by the end of the calendar year. The Center's data system is currently in strong position and she wants to ensure that continues, regardless of where the system is located.

New Business

No new business

Closing

Dr. Enriquez confirmed that, since no changes were made to the meeting schedule in the bylaws, the next meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2018.

Next, Dr. Enriquez acknowledged that this is the last meeting for Dr. Passmore. Dr. Passmore has been involved in all facets of the creation and development of the MLDS. Dr. Passmore has fulfilled numerous roles along the way and his tireless efforts attest to both his and USM's commitment to the MLDS and its

importance as a resource for the State of Maryland. Dr. Passmore's contributions are evident in various aspects of the MLDS and its development.

Dr. Passmore thanked everyone for the opportunities to be involved with and work on the MLDS for the past 10 years. It has been a great experience that directly relates to and will inform his work at his new job for the University of Wisconsin System.

Finally, Mr. Goldstein offered his thanks to Dr. Passmore who served as a critical resource to Mr. Goldstein when he assumed the role of director of the Center. Dr. Passmore's contributions and service will be missed.

Mr. Biggs made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Rizzi. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ross Goldstein
Executive Director

Approved: [pending]